16th March 1923]

The hon. Mr. C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—" I am afraid I must only answer this question by putting another. May I ask whether the hon. Member can guide us in the way of obtaining this information ? It seems to be very difficult to get it."

Mr. A. T. PALMER :—" Yes, Sir."

Pay of non-gazetted officers.

896 Q.—Rao Bahadur M. C. RAJA : Will the hon. the Member for Finance be pleased—

(a) to lay on the table G.O. No. 711, Finance, dated 11th July 1921, fixing the initial pay of non-gazetted subordinate officers in their time-scale re-organization scheme ; and

(b) to state whether, in view of the fact that the benefit of counting past service for advance increment in the case of these subordinates was negatived by a vote of this Council in 1921, it is the intention of Government to exempt those poor public servants who have put in more than ten years' service and who were drawing a salary of less than Rs. 100 per mensem for a period of more than three months prior to 1st March 1921 from the restrictive and negative operation of rules 4, 5 and 8 therein and extend to them with retrospective effect from 1st March 1921 the absolute benefit arising from rules 1 and 3 alone of G.O. No. 711, Finance, dated 11th July 1921 ?

A.—(a) A copy of the Government Order is laid on the table.*

(b) The Government do not propose to grant any general exemption. Individual cases of hardship, if brought to notice, will be considered on their merits.

Forest Panchayats in the Presidency.

897 Q.—Rao Bahadur M. C. RAJA : Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased—

(i) to state—

(a) how many forest panchayats are at present in working order in each of the districts of this Presidency ; and

(b) in how many of them members of depressed classes are nominated ; and

(ii) to call for and lay on the table a monthly digest indicating the activities of the special staff recently sanctioned by Government for the organization of forest panchayats in this Presidency ?

A.—(i) (a) The hon. Member's attention is invited to column 6 of Appendix I to Mr. Bles's report on page 21 of G.O. No. 774, Development, dated 7th June 1922, which has been placed on the Editors' Table.

(b) The Government have no information. The members of each panchayat are selected by the villagers themselves.

(ii) The Government have decided to obtain quarterly reports on the subject.

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* Vide Appendix A on page 2438 infra.